

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following claims replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1 (Currently amended). ~~A clamp for connecting bars, and comprising a body defining at least one pair of prismatic guides for respective said bars; and~~  
~~— means for locking said bars inside said guides;~~  
~~— characterized in that said body is defined by four separate plane sheet metal plates arranged parallel, spaced and facing in pairs of two, and connected substantially along the edges of said body;~~  
~~— said guides each being defined by a pair of aligned seats formed along respective sides of two respective facing plates, said plates each having a first and second opposite side extending along said edges of the body and shaped to fit to respective sides of the adjacent plates having a complementary shape.~~

A clamp for connecting bars, comprising:

a body having at least a first and second prismatic guide for engaging said bars  
and means for locking said bars inside said guides;

characterized in that said body is defined by a first pair of separate planar sheet metal plates arranged parallel and spaced apart and facing each other, and a second pair of planar sheet metal plates arranged parallel and spaced apart and facing each other, the plates of said first pair being perpendicular to the plates of said second pair,

said plates being connected substantially along the edges of said body; and  
each of said plates each having a first and second connection end, said  
connection ends being opposite to each other on said plates and extending  
substantially along respective corners of said body, and having a third and fourth free  
end, said free ends being opposite to each other on said plates, said third free ends of  
said plates facing in a same first direction and said fourth free ends of said plates facing  
a same second direction, said first and second directions being opposite each other;  
and  
each of said connection ends being configured with complementary, engageable  
shapes with respect to said opposing connection ends; and  
each plate of said first pair having its first and second connection ends engaged  
with respective connection ends of respective plates of said second pair; wherein  
said plates of said first pair comprise recesses along their respective third ends  
and face one another to form said first prismatic guide of said body; and  
said plates of said second pair comprise recesses along their respective fourth  
ends and face one another to form said second prismatic guide of said body.

2 (Cancelled).

3 (Cancelled).

4 (Currently amended). A clamp for connecting bars, and comprising a body defining at least one pair of prismatic guides for respective said bars; and

means for locking said bars inside said guides;

characterized in that said body is defined by four separate plane sheet metal plates arranged parallel, spaced and facing in pairs of two, and connected substantially along the edges of said body;

said guides each being defined by a pair of aligned seats formed along respective sides of two respective facing plates, said plates each having a first and second opposite side extending along said edges of the body and shaped to fit to respective sides of the adjacent plates having a complementary shape; and

~~A clamp as claimed in Claim 1,~~ characterized in that said plates are asymmetrically C-shaped, and each comprises two portions of different lengths extending from opposite sides of said seat;

said seat being defined by a back edge and by respective inner edges of said portions.

5 (Original). A clamp as claimed in Claim 4, characterized in that the longer of said portions terminates with a tooth facing inwards of the seat and having a side separated from said back edge by a distance equal to the length of a first side of the respective said bar, and an end surface separated from the inner edge of the other portion by a distance at least equal to the length of a second side of the bar.

6 (Previously Presented). A clamp as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that said plates are identical in each pair of two.

7 (Previously Presented). A clamp as claimed in Claim 6, characterized in that the two identical plates of each pair are adjacent to each other, with the relative seats on opposite sides of said body.

8 (Currently amended). A folding-gluing machine for manufacturing paper articles comprising:

a supporting structure;

a conveying surface for successively conveying blanks; and

a number of blank processing tools connectable to said supporting structure, over said conveying surface, by means of a number of bars;

~~a number of clamps for connecting said bars, each clamp comprising a body defining at least one pair of prismatic guides for respective said bars; and~~

~~— means for locking said bars inside said guides;~~

~~— characterized in that said body is defined by four sheet metal plates arranged parallel and facing in pairs of two, and connected substantially along the edges of said body;~~

~~— said guides each being defined by a pair of aligned seats formed along respective sides of two respective facing plates. and~~

at least one clamp for connecting said bars, said clamp comprising:  
a body having at least a first and second prismatic guide for engaging said bars  
and means for locking said bars inside said guides;

characterized in that said body is defined by a first pair of separate planar sheet  
metal plates arranged parallel and spaced apart and facing each other, and a second  
pair of planar sheet metal plates arranged parallel and spaced apart and facing each  
other, the plates of said first pair being perpendicular to the plates of said second pair,  
said plates being connected substantially along the edges of said body; and

each of said plates each having a first and second connection end, said  
connection ends being opposite to each other on said plates and extending  
substantially along respective corners of said body, and having a third and fourth free  
end, said free ends being opposite to each other on said plates, said third free ends of  
said plates facing in a same first direction and said fourth free ends of said plates facing  
a same second direction, said first and second directions being opposite each other;  
and

each of said connection ends being configured with complementary, engageable  
shapes with respect to said opposing connection ends; and

each plate of said first pair having its first and second connection ends engaged  
with respective connection ends of respective plates of said second pair; wherein

said plates of said first pair comprise recesses along their respective third ends  
and face one another to form said first prismatic guide of said body; and

said plates of said second pair comprise recesses along their respective fourth ends and face one another to form said second prismatic guide of said body.

9 (Currently Amended). A clamp for connecting bars, comprising:  
a body having at least one pair of prismatic guides for engaging said bars and  
means for locking said bars inside said guides;

characterized in that said body is defined by four separable, planar sheet metal  
plates arranged parallel, spaced apart and facing each other in pairs of two to define  
respective pairs of facing plates, and connected substantially along the edges of said  
body in pairs of two to define respective pairs of first and second adjacent plates;

wherein each of said first and second adjacent plates comprises a first and a  
second end, said ends being opposite to each other;

each of said ends being configured with complementary, engagable shapes with  
respect to said opposing end, and

one of said ends of said first adjacent plate engaging said respective  
complementary opposing end of said second adjacent plate to form said edges;

said guides each being defined by a pair of aligned seats formed along  
respective sides of two respective facing plates; and

~~A clamp as claimed in Claim 3,~~ characterized in that said plates are  
asymmetrically C-shaped, and each comprises two portions of different lengths  
extending from opposite sides of said seat;

said seat being defined by a back edge and by respective inner edges of said portions.

10 (Previously Presented). A clamp as claimed in Claim 9, characterized in that the longer of said portions terminates with a tooth facing inwards of the seat and having a side separated from said back edge by a distance equal to the length of a first side of the respective said bar, and an end surface separated from the inner edge of the other portion by a distance at least equal to the length of a second side of the bar.

11 (Currently Amended). A clamp for connecting bars, comprising:  
a body having at least one pair of prismatic guides for engaging said bars and  
means for locking said bars inside said guides;

characterized in that said body is defined by four separable, planar sheet metal  
plates arranged parallel, spaced apart and facing each other in pairs of two to define  
respective pairs of facing plates, and connected substantially along the edges of said  
body in pairs of two to define respective pairs of first and second adjacent plates;

wherein each of said first and second adjacent plates comprises a first and a  
second end, said ends being opposite to each other;

each of said ends being configured with complementary, engagable shapes with  
respect to said opposing end, and

one of said ends of said first adjacent plate engaging said respective

Application No. 10/783,992

complementary opposing end of said second adjacent plate to form said edges;

said guides each being defined by a pair of aligned seats formed along  
respective sides of two respective facing plates; and

~~A clamp as claimed in Claim 3,~~ characterized in that said plates are identical in each pair of two.

12 (Previously Presented). A clamp as claimed in Claim 11, characterized in that the two identical plates of each pair are adjacent to each other, with the relative seats on opposite sides of said body.